



مؤسسة الرعاية الصحية الأولية  
PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CORPORATION

# Breastfeeding



Why to  
Breastfeed  
Your Baby  
and How?





“Mothers shall breastfeed their children for two whole years;  
(that is) for those who wish to complete the breastfeed”

sūrat al-baqarah «233»

**Breast milk is the perfect natural, integrated food source for your baby.** It contains all the nutrients required to meet the growth and development requirements of your baby.

If mothers are able to breastfeed, it is encouraged to exclusively feed their babies breast milk for the first six months of their life. This means not giving babies any water, juice or herbs in the first six months.

After six months, babies will require additional foods and liquids (solid foods) to be added to their diet to support their growth and development. Mothers can continue to provide breast milk to their baby until they are 2 years of age.



# Benefits



## Benefits of breastfeeding for the mother

- Strengthens loving bond between a mother and her baby.
- Increases the secretion of hormones necessary for the contraction of the uterus to support its return to normal size after childbirth. This protects the mother from complications such as postpartum hemorrhage.
- Reduces the incidence of breast cancer and ovarian cancer.
- Supports positive birth spacing.
- Supports the reduction of weight gained during pregnancy and reduces the rate of obesity in the future.





## Benefits of breastfeeding for the baby

- Breast milk is the most balanced food, covering all nutritional requirements of the baby in the first six months of life, half of the requirements during the second half of the first year and about one-third of the requirements during the second year of life.
- Breast milk is the most suitable food for the digestive system of the infant.
- Breast milk supports the immune system of your baby (especially important if the baby is delivered prematurely) providing protection from bacterial infections and helping to reduce infant mortality due to common infections like diarrhea or pneumonia.
- Breast milk is available at any time for the baby to feed.
- Breast milk reduces the chance of your baby being overweight or obese later in life.
- Breastfeeding helps the growth of the infant's jaw and teeth and promotes better development of speech.
- Breast milk reduces the risk of chronic diseases of old age such as heart disease, hypertension, asthma and non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus (Type II) and cancers.
- Studies have shown that the average Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is higher in children who are breastfed than bottle fed children. It is also noted that a longer duration of breastfeeding contributes to increased intelligence later in life.



## Benefits of breastfeeding to the community

- Reduced costs to families.
- Long-term improvement of community health.
- Reduced health care cost (less visits to doctor and hospital).
- Improved productivity and reduced absenteeism among breastfeeding mothers as a result of healthier children.



# Breast Milk



## Breast milk types

### Colostrum

Colostrum is the special part of breast milk, secreted in the first 2-3 days after delivery. It is produced in small amounts, about 40-50 ml on the first day, which is enough for the normal requirements of the baby at this time.

Colostrum is rich in nutrients and antibodies. It is important that the baby receives colostrum, at this time to ensure maximum benefit.



## Mature milk

Mature breast milk starts to be produced in larger amounts between the 2nd and 4th days after delivery giving the mother the sense of breast fullness. The baby increases milk consumption on the 5<sup>th</sup> day to 500-800 ml per day on average. The amount of milk consumption varies according to each mother and baby, ranging from 440 - 1220 (average of 800) ml per day during the first six months of life.

## Breast milk composition

Breast milk contains all the nutrients that an infant needs in the first 6 months of life. These include fat, carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, minerals and water. It also contains bioactive factors that augment the infant's immature immune system, providing protection against infection.

## Fat

Breast milk contains about 3.5 g of fat per 100 ml of milk and this amount increases as the feeding progresses. As a result, the hind milk secreted towards the end of a feed is rich in fat so you need to ensure the completion of a single breastfeeding session. like fat.

## Proteins

Breast milk contains about 0.9 g of quality protein per 100 ml of milk which supports the baby's kidney function.

## Vitamins and minerals

Breast milk normally contains essential vitamins and minerals for the baby such as iron and zinc. Its preferable to provide vitamin D to the baby as directed by a doctor.



## The correct methods of breastfeeding

**Each mother will find the most suitable way to breastfeed that works for both her and her baby. This may be sitting, standing or lying. It is important for both mother and baby to be relaxed and comfortable to support milk flow and for effective feeding.**

- Start breastfeeding before the baby starts crying and before the breasts are filled with milk as this makes it difficult for the baby to suck at the breast properly.
- Start breastfeeding by touching the lips of the baby with the nipple until the baby opens its mouth. Do not force the nipple into the mouth, if the baby does not wish to feed.
- It is important to make sure that the baby is placed comfortably and the attachment to the breast is correct. Inadequate positioning may prevent the completion of successful feeding.
- Signs of effective suckling indicate that milk is flowing into the baby's mouth. Baby will take slow, deep suckles followed by a visible or audible swallow. Sometimes the baby pauses for few seconds then starts suckling again. They may suckle quickly a few times; stimulating milk flow, and then the slow deep suckles begin. It is important for the feed to continue until the baby is satisfied, at which point it usually releases the attachment to the breast spontaneously.

## Breast feeding positions



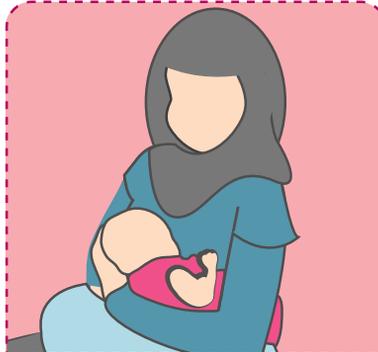
Cross Cradle Hold



Cradle Hold

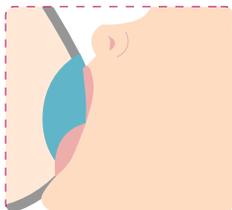


Lying on the side

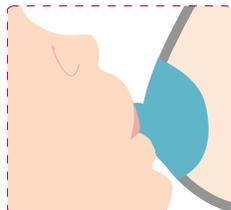


Football Hold

## Good and poor infant breast attachment during breastfeeding



**Good Attachment**



**Poor Attachment**

The baby's body should be straight, not bent or twisted	The baby's neck and head twisted to feed
The baby's head and body are in line	The baby's head is bent and out of line with its body
The baby's chin is touching or almost touching the breast	The baby's chin is turned away from the breast
The baby's mouth is wide opened	The baby's mouth is not wide opened
More areola is visible above the baby's upper lip than below the lower lip	More areola is visible below the baby's lower lip than above the upper lip
The nipple and much of the areola are inside the baby's mouth	The nipple is just inside the baby's mouth
The baby's lower lip is curled outwards	The baby's lower lip points forward or is turned inwards
Slow, deep sucks with pauses	Rapid shallow sucks
There is no pain in the nipple	There is pain or discomfort in the nipple

# Signs



## Signs of milk flow from the breast

While some mothers may notice signs of milk flow from their breast the signs may not be obvious and some mother may not be aware of them.

Signs of milk flow may include:

- Tingling sensation in the breast before or during a feed.
- Milk leaking from the breasts when the mother thinks of the baby or hears his/her crying.
- Milk leaking from the other breast when the baby is suckling.
- Uterine pain or vaginal bleeding from the uterus.
- Thirst during breastfeeding.
- Slow and deep sucks and swallowing by the baby during breastfeeding, demonstrates that milk is flowing into his/her mouth.



## Recommendations for successful and beneficial breastfeeding

- Skin to skin contact between the baby and the mother as soon as possible after birth is very important to calm the baby, regulate body temperature and stimulate breastfeeding.
- Breastfeeding should begin within the first half hour after birth, depending on the condition of the mother and baby.
- Breastfeeding on the first day of a child's life is about 5 minutes per breast and then gradually increases until it reaches 15 minutes on each breast on the fourth day, which is sufficient to complete the lactation period.
- The baby should be placed in the same room and close to his/her mother. It is important for their emotional bond formation and the sound of a crying baby causes biological reactions in the mother's body leading to increased secretion of hormones responsible for milk production.
- Colostrum, a yellow fluid produced by the mother's breast in the first three days of birth is important for the baby.
- If the mother is keen on breastfeeding, nothing ought to be given to the baby except breast milk for the first six months exclusively after birth.
- The hormone responsible for milk production increases excretion at night, therefore it is best to feed at that time.

- The number of feeds should be based on the baby's demand. However, no less than eight feedings a day is necessary to generate the largest amount of breast milk. Feed the baby from both breasts during each feed.

**Burping your baby** - Repeated gentle patting on your baby's back after each feed or between breastfeeding by raising and placing the baby on your shoulder this will help to get rid of the air that babies may swallow while feeding.



- The mother should attempt to empty the breast of milk through regular feedings or by expressing by hand or using a breast pump. The emptying process prevents breast engorgement. If nipple or breast issues occur, continue to breastfeed and seek medical advice.
- The mother should maintain baby safety during breastfeeding by following good attachment technique. In addition she should ensure baby safety especially when she sleeps during baby feeding.
- Breastfeeding has multiple and important benefits to health in terms of increasing immunity and resistance to disease for babies born prematurely.

- Mothers can continue breastfeeding when returning to work and can express their milk and store it to be given to the baby while they are away.
- It is best not to use the bottle or a pacifier at all because it may cause confusion for the baby between the nipple and the teat and lower their desire to foster to the mother's breast.
- The physical and psychological comfort of the mother is necessary for the continuation of breastfeeding.
- It is important for mothers to drink plenty of fluids, eat fresh foods and increase their calorie intake at least an extra 500 calories a day to support milk production.
- The mother should seek assistance for maternal and baby care if she experiences any difficulties breastfeeding at any time.
- The mother can begin to add supplementary food (solids) in the sixth month of the baby's life while continuing to breastfeed until the baby reaches its second year of age.

The mother should ask for medical advice if she experiences any difficulties breastfeeding.





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